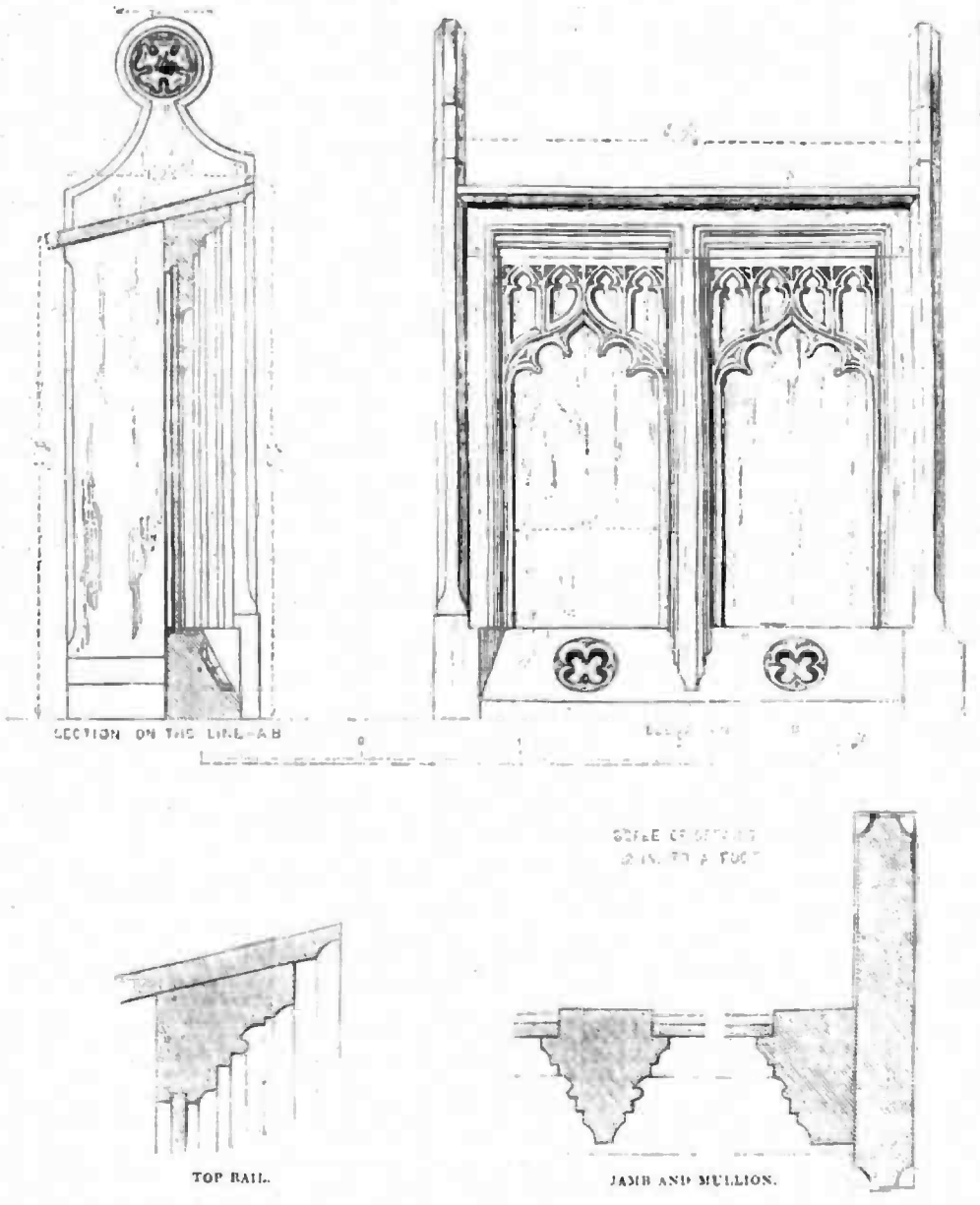
LITANY DESK, WELLS CATHEDRAL.



LITANY DESK FROM WELLS CATHEDRAL.

The accompanying details of an original litany desk, which for a long time was amongst lumber in the crypt of Wells Cathedral, will be found useful. It belongs to the 15th century, and is simple and effective.

THE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

On Wednesday last the annual meeting was held in Somerset House to receive the director's report and distribute the prizes, when Mr. Bellenden Carr was in the chair, and Mr. B. Hawes, M.P., and Mr. Etty, R.A., addressed the meeting. The report set forth that the drawings rewarded, and which were exhibited, had not been made in competition, as heretofore, but were selected from the work of the year, and that no prizes had been expected. Mr. Hawes made some very judicious remarks on the value of the institution, and said its progress was identified with the progress of our manufactures. We regret that we cannot use the tone of gratulation adopted throughout the proceedings. We do not think the result such as a Government school of design, with Messrs. Townsend, Horsley, and C. J. Richardson for masters, might and ought to produce. Many of the drawings exhibited are admirably executed, but with one exception, we are speaking now of the male school, they are all copies; the exception is a set of three finger plates designed for the Duchess of Sutherland by Mr. Pearce. The system pursued is not equal to the wants of the pupils; it is copy, copy, copy, and nothing more. No development of principles, no endeavours to elicit original ability,—and the result is, that the pupils as they reach a certain stage, finding they can go no further, leave the establishment, which remains therefore a simple drawing school, and, under the present arrangement, will never get beyond it.

In the ladies' department, the exhibition is far more satisfactory; Mr. Etty even said, that some of the specimens were as good in their class as any thing he had ever seen, and reflected the highest credit on Mrs. Mclan, the mistress. Indeed, we would not have it inferred, that no credit is due to the masters in the other school; the reverse is the case, and our remarks apply only to the system by which they themselves are trammelled and kept down. We were informed some time ago, that the director, Mr. Wilson, had forbidden the appearance of The Builder in the school, on account of the part we took on a former occasion. If this be true, it is very foolish, to say the best of it. We have no personal feeling in the question; our sole aim is to induce the adoption of such a system as may ensure the most perfect results, and in a matter so important as the National School of Design, we should fail in our duty to the public, if we allowed consideration for individual feelings to interfere with the honest expression of our opinion.

Previous to the meeting on Wednesday, a handsome vase was presented to the director by some of the pupils, leading us to suppose that a better feeling exists in the school than was the case some time ago. We heartily trust it may be so, and shall look anxiously for some important changes when the pupils again assemble.

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